Allowing farmers to develop their own fields under NREGS

*359. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM.
SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has favoured the extension of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) to enable the farmers to develop their own fields;

(b) whether to include the farmers under the NREGS to work on their own fields is a new idea and can be considered; and

(c) if so, whether any final decision in this regard has been taken and whether Members of Parliament also recommended to extend the NREGS to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI RAGUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Schedule I of NREG Act, 2005 provides for the various activities of work in their order of priority which can be taken up under the Act. Para 1 (iv) of Schedule I provided for provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India. *Vide* notification dated 6.3.2007, this provision has been amended to provide for provision of irrigation facility, horticulture plantation and land development facilities on land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes or to Below Poverty Line families or to beneficiaries of land reforms or to the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India.

(b) No such proposal is under consideration.

(c) No recommendation from Members of Parliament for extension of NREGS to farmers has been received in the Ministry of Rural Development.

Losses due to rains in southern States I

*360. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that heavy rains lashed the southern Indian States during March this year, which caused heavy losses both of human lives and property;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether any Central assistance has been given to the States for the losses suffered; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the basis thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RADHIKA V. SELVI): (a) and (b) The following southern States/UT Administration, based on their preliminary assessment, have reported damage due to heavy rains/hailstorm during March and April, 2008:—